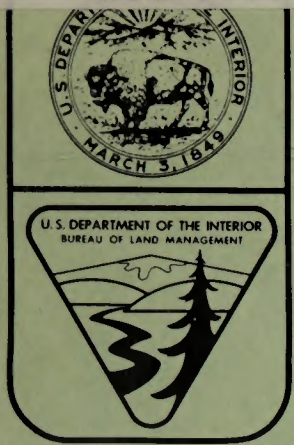




88073085

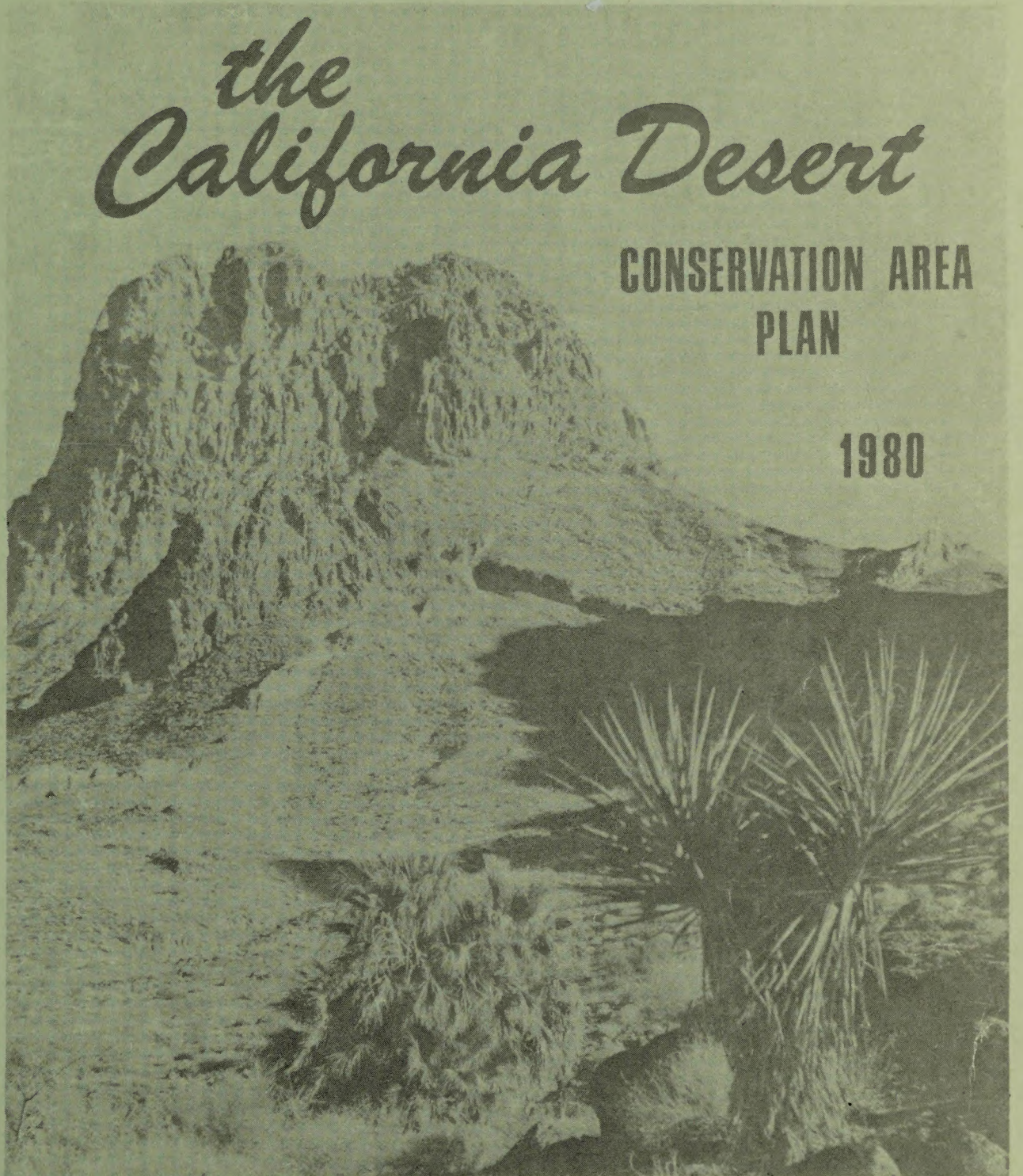


# 1983 PLAN AMENDMENTS TO

## *the California Desert*

CONSERVATION AREA  
PLAN

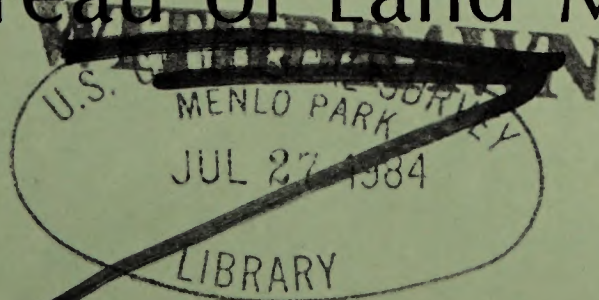
1980



RECORD  
OF  
DECISION

United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
California

QH  
76.5  
.D2  
C313  
1984  
c. 3



Desert District



BLM Library  
Denver Federal Center  
Bldg. 50, OC-521  
P.O. Box 25047  
Denver, CO 80225



# 11007781

ID: 88073085

QH  
76.5  
D2  
C313  
1984  
C.3

California Desert District  
1695 Spruce Street  
Riverside, California 92507

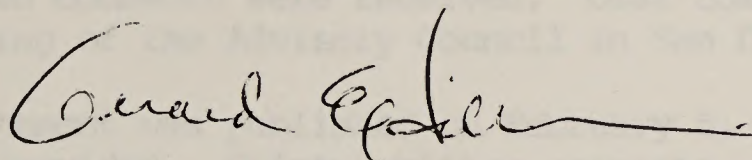
1600  
(C-060.2)

Memorandum

To: State Director (C-910)  
From: District Manager, California Desert  
Subject: 1983 Amendment Decision

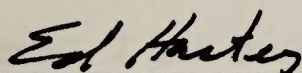
Enclosed is the Record of Decision for the 1983 Amendment Review of the California Desert Plan indicating my approval of the amendments.

The enclosed document is provided for your review and concurrence.



Enclosure

I concur with the California Desert District Manager's amendment decisions attached.



State Director, California Desert



California State Board  
1000 State Street  
Riverside, California 92501

1000  
(10-000.1)

Memorandum

To: State Director (10-010)

From: District Manager, (10) Santa Ana

Subject: 1983 Assessment Revision

Enclosed is the record of decision for the 1983 assessment revision of the  
California State Board of Equalization and the assessment.

The enclosed document is provided for your review and comment.

*Charles E. [Signature]*

Enclosure

I concur with the California State Board of Equalization's assessment decision  
attached.

*[Signature]*  
State Director, California Board



RECORD OF DECISION

The 1983 amendment review of the California Desert Conservation Area Plan was conducted in accordance with Bureau of Land Management Planning Regulations, 43 CFR 1600 as amended November 23, 1981 (FR, Vol. 46, P. 57448), with the procedures set forth in Chapter 7 of the CDCA Plan 1980, and with the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500).

During a 45-day period, from mid-March to April 30, 1983, approximately 40 amendments were proposed by the public and by the BLM staff. These were screened by BLM management and were considered by the Desert Advisory Council at a public "scoping" meeting held in Palm Springs on May 19, 1983. Fourteen amendments were accepted for consideration in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The remainder were rejected, deferred, or could be handled through other administrative processes.

The public comment period on the Draft EIS extended from September 9, 1983 to December 9, 1983. Eighty written comments were received. Oral comments were accepted at the November meeting of the Advisory Council in San Diego.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement was published on February 5, 1984. A 30-day public review period was provided. Thirty written comments were received. Sixty days were allowed for governor's review.

The preferred alternatives for Amendments 3, 7, 10, and 11 have been changed from those recommended in the Final EIS. For Amendment 3, closure of the Devil's Playground, south of Soda Dry Lake, was rejected in favor of less stringent methods for limiting access to this area. Vehicle access will be directed toward use of approved routes of travel. Special procedures will be developed for route designation, including providing routes for seasonal use of the Mojave Road and other purposes.

Amendment 7 was accepted. ACEC designation will allow the development of protective measures for a representative stand of the Mojave Fishhook Cactus. It will protect an extremely rare yellow-spined form of this sensitive species.

For Amendment 10, it does not appear that the amount of forage is sufficient to warrant an allotment expansion. Instead, a grazing permit may be issued on a one-time, non-renewable basis whenever forage becomes available.

The recommended alternative for Amendment 11 was changed slightly by extending the boundary of the allotment expansion one mile to the north in the eastern portion. This will reduce the amount of fencing required, by using natural features for barriers.

Amendments 13 and 14 were deferred until the Court rules on a preliminary injunction (September 9, 1983) setting aside the Secretarial Order of December 30, 1982 which required the deletion of most of these areas from wilderness consideration, because of "split estate" mineral rights. When the litigation is resolved, the Bureau will prepare a Record of Decision confirming the Court's ruling and will implement the decision accordingly.



The combination of approved amendments comprises the third amendment to the Desert Plan. Each component amendment is described below. Proposed amendments which were either rejected or deferred are described in Appendix B of the Draft EIS. A general overview of public comments is given in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS.



## AMENDMENT ONE

### CLOSE CRONESE DRY LAKES

#### Proposed Amendment

Add the East and West Cronese Dry Lake to the "significant list" in the Motorized Vehicle Element and designate them "closed" to motorized vehicle use. This is the environmentally preferable alternative.

#### Other Alternatives Considered

No Action.

#### Decision

Accept Proposed Amendment with modification. A route of travel will be designated to provide access to the areas around both lakes. The route would be designated for use in both wet and dry seasons.

#### Rationale

The Cronese Lakes are an important migratory stopover for waterfowl. there are many cultural sites located along the shorelines. Closure would prevent disturbance and protect waterfowl food sources. Recreational use of the lake beds has been low, so the effect of closure would be minimal. An existing route near the lakes provides access to the area. The Desert District Advisory Council noted that the status of this route was ambiguous under the amendment, and suggested it be designated an open route to clarify the situation.

#### Implementation Needs

Designate route of travel.

Cornel E. Linn  
District Manager

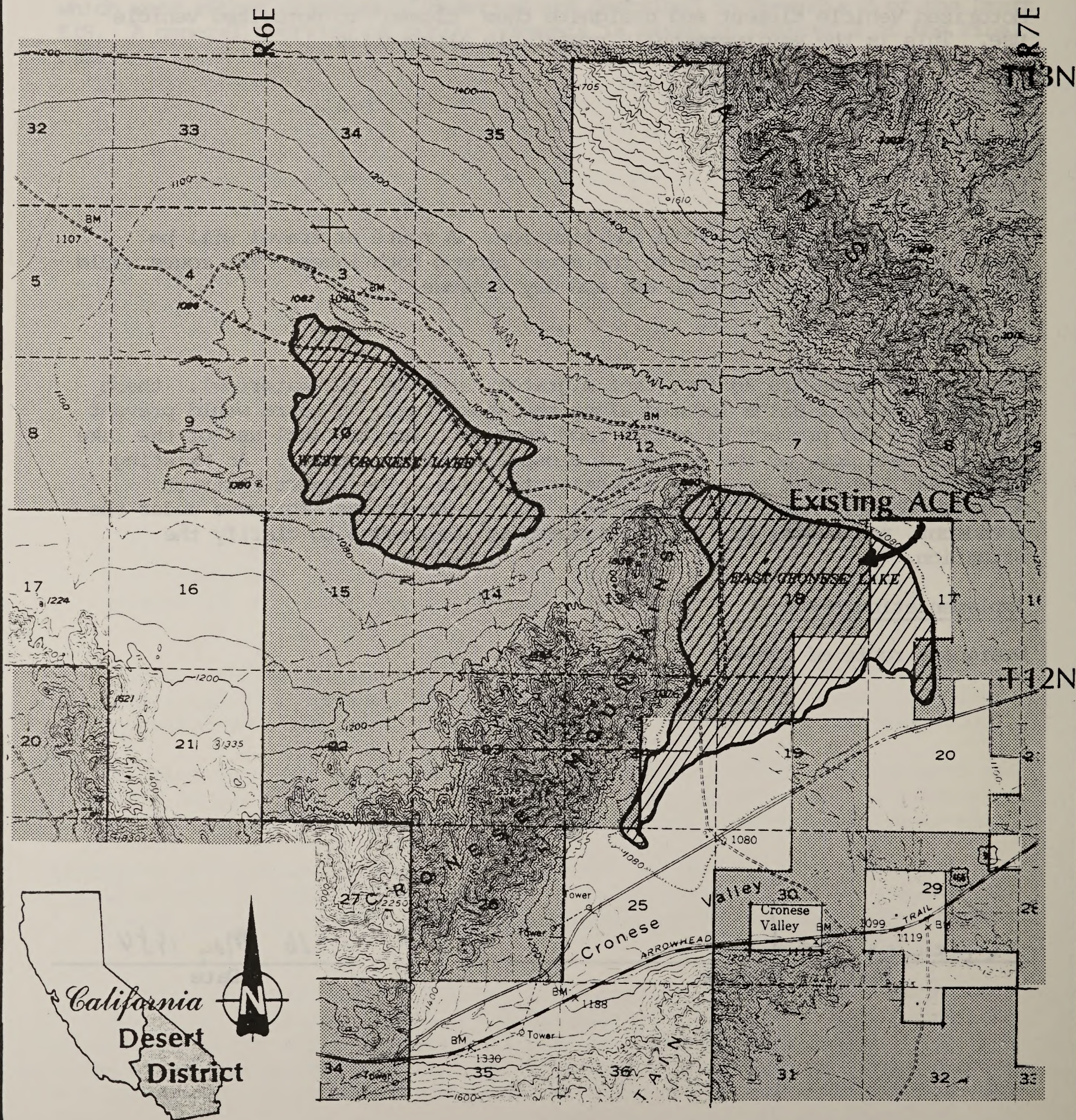
16 May 1984  
Date



Proposed addition to "Significant List"  
 Designate as  
 "Closed" to motorized vehicle use



# Amendment 1 Cronese Lake





AMENDMENT TWO

CLOSE IBEX DUNES

Proposed Amendment

Add the Ibex Dunes to the "significant list" in the Motorized Vehicle Element and designate them "closed" to motorized vehicle use. This is the environmentally preferable alternative.

Other Alternative Considered

No Action.

Decision

Accept Proposed amendment

Rationale

Nearly 90% of the dunes are in Death Valley National Monument and are already closed. Closure of the BLM portion would permit consistent management of the entire dune system. Closure would also protect wildlife, vegetation, and cultural values while producing minimal impact on recreation. The dunes are isolated from public lands by the Saddle Peak Hills, and little off-road vehicles use is known to occur there.

Implementation Needs

None

Gerard E. Eichen  
District Manager

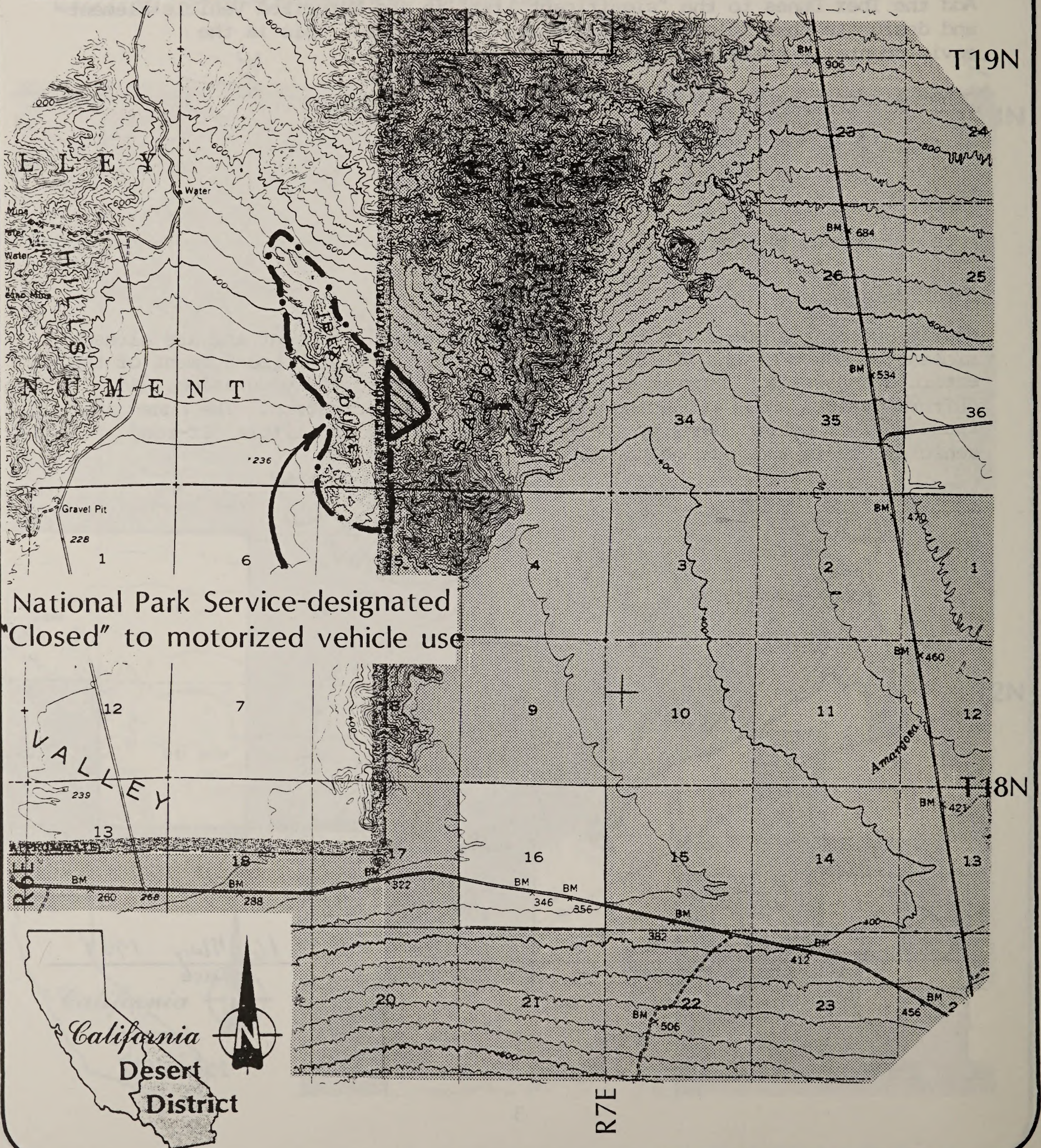
16 May 1984  
Date



## Amendment 2 Ibex Dunes

Proposed addition to "Significant List"

Designate as  
"Closed" to motorized vehicle use



National Park Service-designated  
"Closed" to motorized vehicle use



### AMENDMENT THREE

#### CLOSE PART OF DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND

##### Proposed Amendment

Close approximately 18,000 acres of public lands in the Devil's Playground south of Soda Dry Lake to vehicle entry. This is the environmentally preferable alternative.

##### Other Alternatives Considered

No Action.

##### Decision

Reject proposed amendment. Area will remain a "limited" vehicle access area, with vehicle access directed toward use of approved routes of travel. At the time of the route designation process, BLM will develop special procedures for designating routes in this area. This will include providing routes for seasonal use of the Mojave Road and other purposes.

##### Rationale

The adjacent Rasor Open Area was enlarged to the west for two purposes: (1) to provide a manageable area for ORV use and (2) to provide an alternative to use of the environmentally sensitive Devil's Playground. A closure south of Soda Lake could clarify the use pattern allowed in the region. However, there are legitimate access needs into the area, including seasonal use of the Mojave Road.

Due to the sandy nature of existing routes in the area, the route designation process would not be likely to open these routes, resulting in a de facto "closed" area. Special route designation procedures will allow these needs to be met while solving the problem of open area "spread" by clearly defining available access routes. In no way will such use be allowed to encourage general play in the area.

##### Implementation Needs

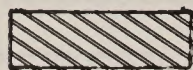

Develop special designation procedures.

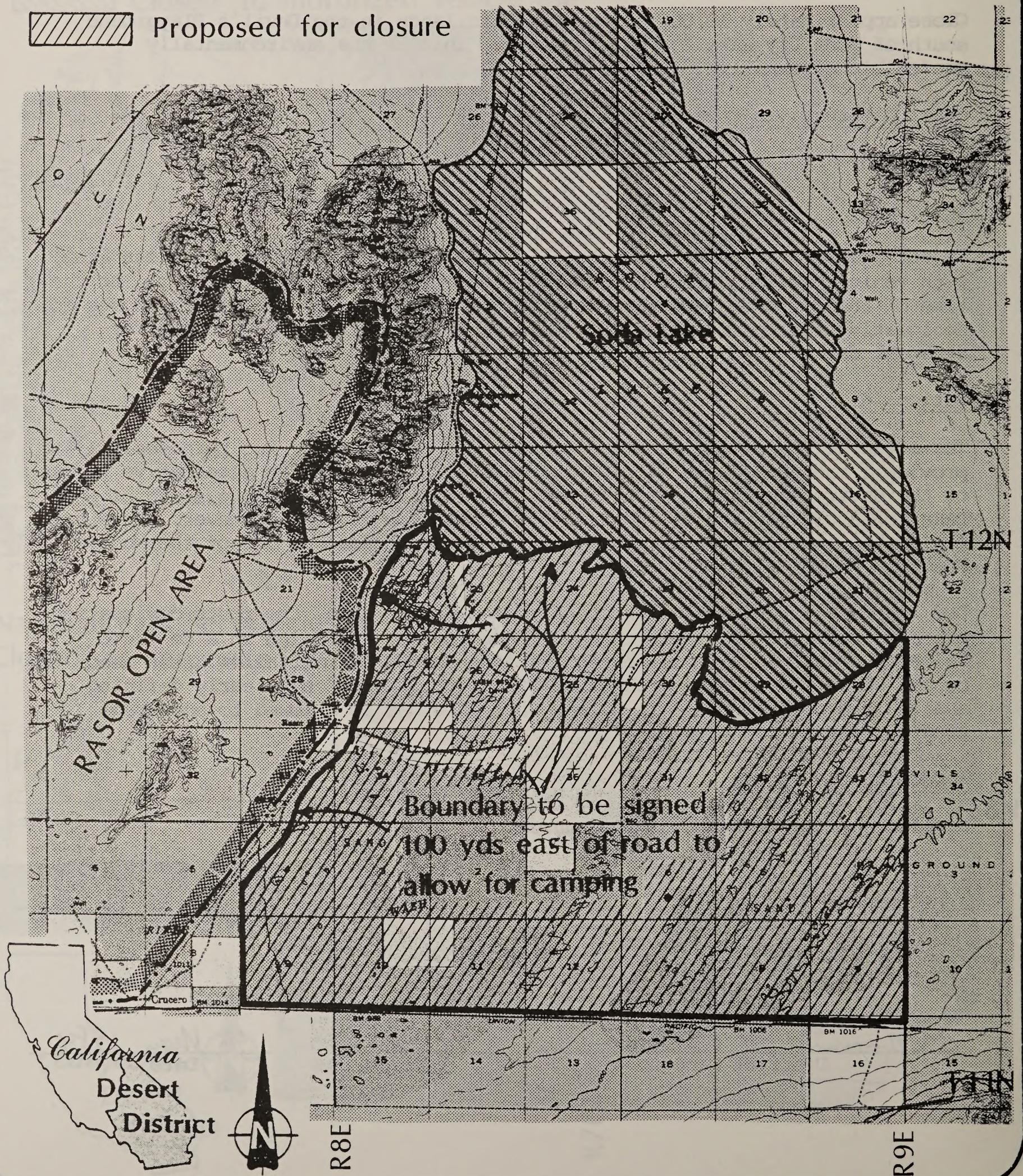
Conrad E. Filer  
District Manager

16 May 1984  
Date



# Amendment 3 Devil's Playground

-  Existing "Closed" area
-  Proposed for closure





## AMENDMENT FOUR

### GUIDELINES FOR LAND SALE

#### Proposed Amendment

Clarify multiple-use class guidelines for land sales.

Class C: Public lands will not be sold.

Class L: Sales of public lands allowed in accordance with FLPMA and other applicable Federal laws and regulations, but only where disposal is in public interest and it is determined to be highest and best use. Proposed use must be consistent with historical use and the low-intensity management philosophy of Class L. Sales in WSAs would not be allowed until after Congress acts.

Class M and I: Sales of public lands may be allowed in accordance with FLPMA and other applicable Federal laws and regulations. Sales in WSAs would not be allowed until after Congressional action.

Unclassified: Sales of public lands may be allowed.

#### Other Alternative Consideration

No Action.

#### Decision

Accept proposed amendment with the following modification. Public lands will not be sold in Classes C, L, and I. Lands Sales will only be allowed in Class M, and Unclassified lands, subject to FLPMA and other applicable Federal laws and regulations. Lands in Classes C, L, and I could only be sold after first changing their classification through the plan amendment process.

#### Rationale

The Desert Plan lacks specific information on the sale of public lands in all multiple use classes except "unclassified." The proposed guidelines would complement other land sale and tenure adjustment tools (such as exchanges and Recreation and Public Purposes applications) already detailed in the Land Tenure Adjustment Element.



Lands designated for wilderness (Class C), limited use (Class L), or intensive use (Class I) must be reclassified through the amendment process before sale. Lands designated for moderate use (Class M) or "unclassified" lands may be sold subject to the above listed conditions. These guidelines will facilitate land sales in areas with less sensitive natural resources while continuing the requirement for the plan amendment process in lands usually subject to greater public concern.

Implementation Needs

None

Gerard E. Hill  
District Manager

16 May 1984  
Date





## AMENDMENT FIVE

### CHANGE AREA NORTH OF SHOSHONE FROM CLASS M TO CLASS L

#### Proposed Amendment

Change Planning Units 44e and 48e (area north and east of Shoshone) from Class M to Class L. This is the environmentally preferable alternative.

#### Other Alternatives Considered

No Action

#### Decision

Accept proposed amendment.

#### Rationale

This area contains a thermal cave which is habitat for several species of endemic cave vertebrates; disturbance of this cave environment could result in their extinction. The area also contains a portion of the Amargosa River drainage which flows into the Gramshaw lake basin and wetland habitats for a variety of rare and unique forms of wildlife. Class L designation recognizes these sensitive biological resources, but allow for mineral exploration and development in this area of low mineral potential. The requirement for Plans of Operation for surface-disturbing activities on areas of less than five acres will provide time to review mining proposals, consult with other wildlife agencies, and develop protective mitigation measures.

#### Implementation Needs

None

Conrad E. Eitel


District Manager

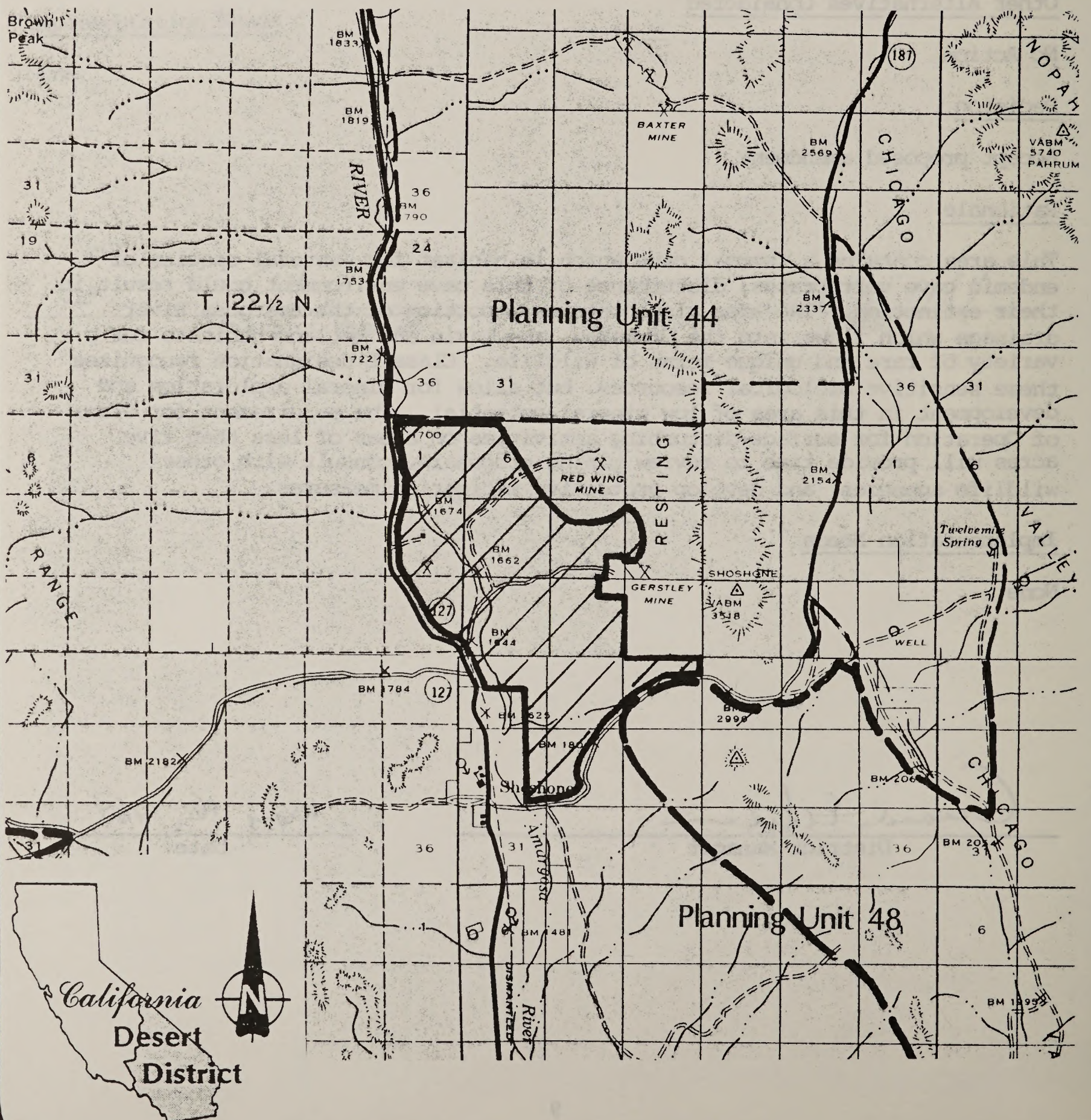
May 16, 1984

Date



# Amendment 5 Planning Units 44e/48e

 Change from "M" to "L"





AMENDMENT SIX

CHANGE CREOSOTE RINGS ACEC TO CLASS L

Proposed Amendment

Change the Creosote Rings ACEC from "unclassified" to Class L. This is an area of approximately 278 acres in T. 4 N., R. 3 E., Section 17. This is the environmentally preferable alternative.

Other Alternative Considered

No Action.

Decision

Accept proposed amendment.

Rationale

ACEC designation implies a long-term commitment to maintain lands in public ownership. "Unclassified" lands imply a disposal intent. Class L designation is more consistent with the goals of an ACEC. Although on-the-ground management will not change, reclassification to Class L will clearly segregate this area from the nearby Johnson Valley Open Area and should result in less inadvertent damage by ORVs.

Implementation Needs

None

Conrad E. Eide

District Manager

16 May 1984

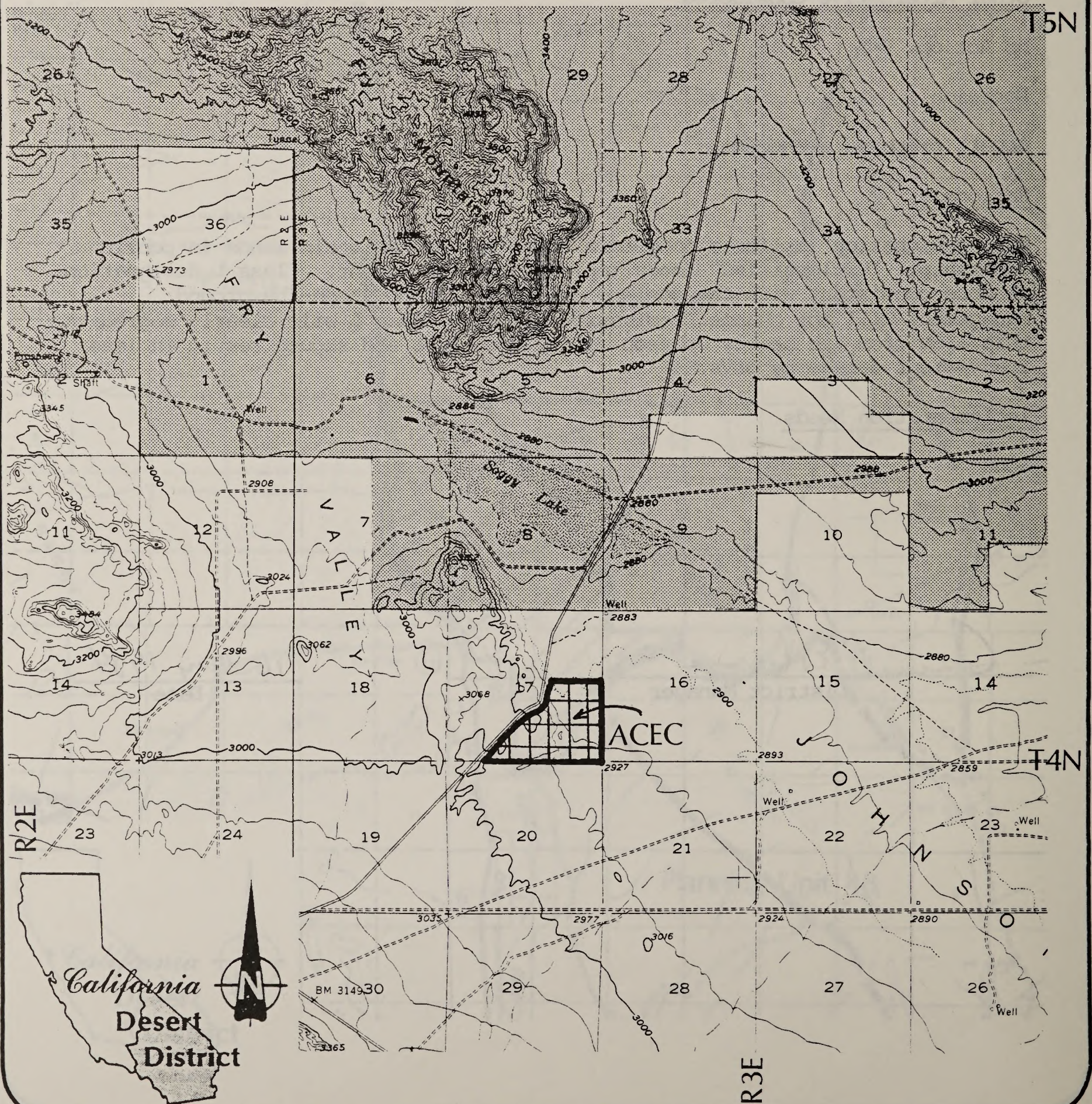
Date



# Amendment 6 Creosote Rings ACEC



Change from "Unclassified" to "L"





AMENDMENT SEVEN

NEW ACEC (MOJAVE FISHHOOK CACTUS)  
NEAR HELENDALE

Proposed Amendment

Designate a new ACEC near Helendale to protect habitat of the Mojave Fishhook Cactus (Sclerocactus polyancistrus). This is Alternative A, the environmentally preferable alternative.

Other Alternatives

- B. Change that part of the area presently "unclassified" to Class M.
- C. No Action.

Decision

Accept proposed amendment.

Rationale

ACEC designation would allow the development of protective measures for a representative stand of this sensitive species. It would protect an extremely rare yellow-spined form of the Fishhook Cactus which also occurs here. Designation would ensure that such actions are implemented and monitored yearly, a process provided for in BLM's annual workplan program.

Implementation Needs

Develop and implement ACEC management plan.

Conrad E. L. [Signature]  
District Manager

16 May 1984  
Date

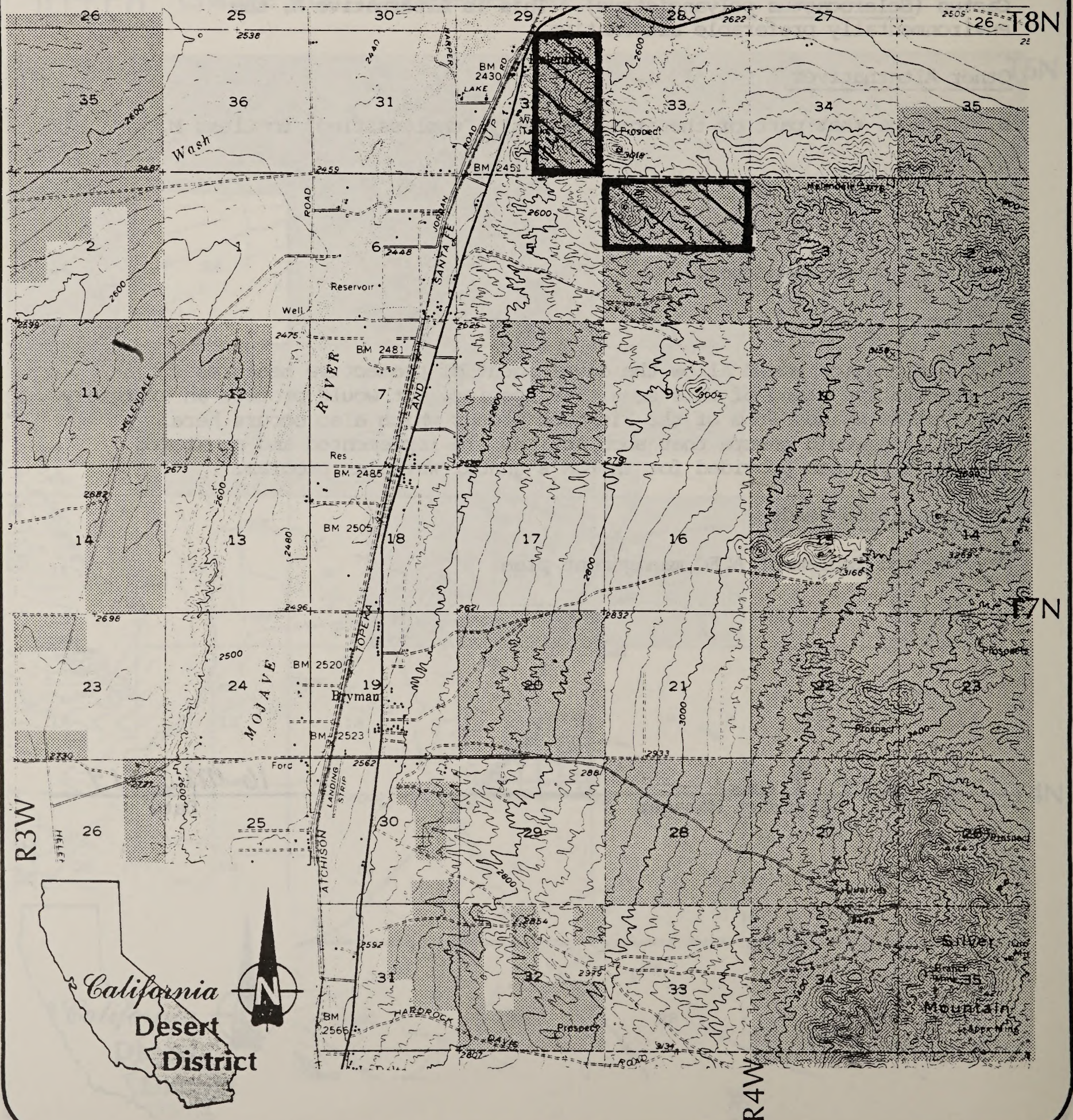


Alt.A  
Designate ACEC



Alt.B  
Change from "Unclassified" to "M"

# Amendment 7 Mojave Fishhook Cactus ACEC





## AMENDMENT EIGHT

### NEW ACEC (ALLIGATOR ROCK) NEAR DESERT CENTER

#### Proposed Amendment

Establish a new ACEC (12 square miles) south of Desert Center for protection of archaeological sites. The name of ACEC will be "Alligator Rock." This is the environmentally preferable alternative.

#### Other Alternative

No Action.

#### Decision

Accept proposed amendment.

#### Rationale

Since completion of the Desert Plan, 22 archaeological sites have been recorded here; two are on the National Register of Historic Places. This very significant complex of sites represents a microcosm of the archaeology of the Indio Resource Area. It gives evidence of having had an exceptionally long and continuous history of use, and is tied by trails to all of the major rock sites in the resource area. Recreational use presents serious threats to these cultural resources.

Class L guidelines, alone, are insufficient to establish controls to prevent site damage. An ACEC designation would allow restriction of camping and access and would control inadvertent damage of sites without unduly restricting current use. A significant group of archaeological sites and their surrounding environment would be preserved.

The first phase of preparation of the ACEC management plan for this area will be to conduct a Class II cultural survey to determine the location of cultural sites, of which only a portion have been identified thus far. This information will allow reassessment of the ACEC boundaries and consideration of size reduction. Until this survey has been completed, it will be necessary to control access through measures such as signing and ranger patrol.

The goal of the management plan will be to protect cultural resources without unduly restricting current use. The plan will identify locations where camping should be allowed or restricted as well as areas where fencing will be required.



Implementation Needs

Conduct Class II cultural survey. Develop and implement ACEC Management Plan.

Gerard E. Ehlert  
District Manager

May 16, 1984  
Date



Public land-Designate ACEC



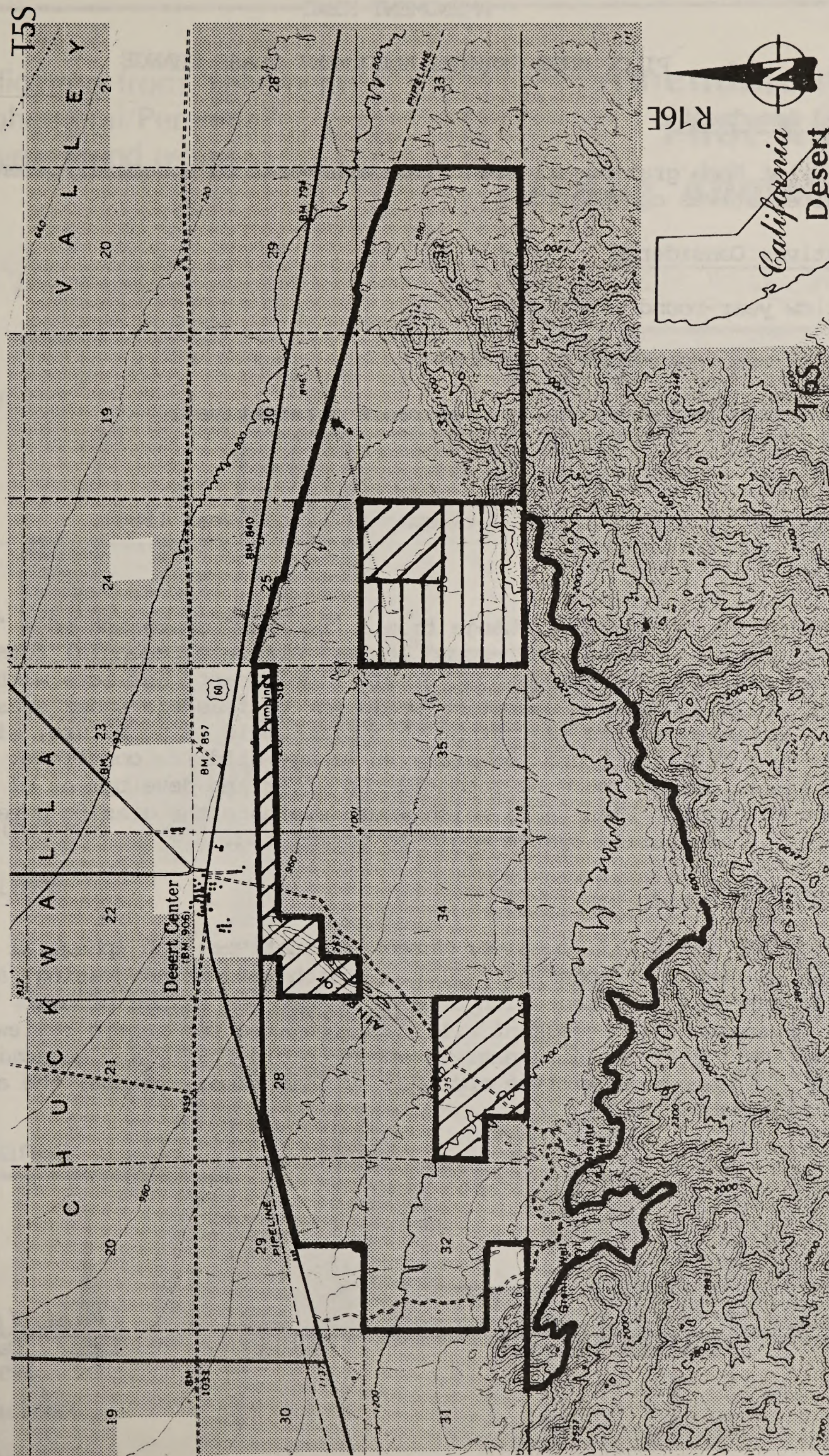
Private land



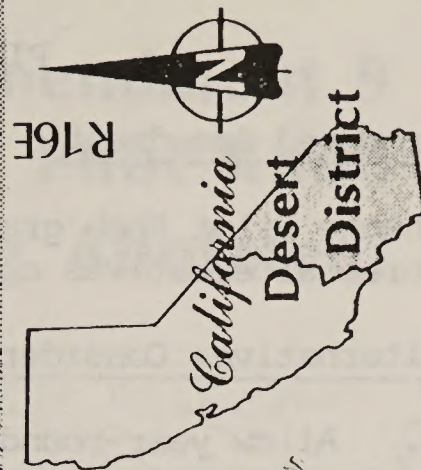
State land



## Amendment 8 Alligator Rock ACEC



R 15E





## AMENDMENT NINE

### PILOT KNOB GRAZING ALLOTMENT CLASS CHANGE

#### Proposed Amendment

Change Pilot Knob grazing allotment from ephemeral to ephemeral/perennial.  
Three alternatives considered:

#### Alternatives Considered

- A. Allow year-round grazing.
- B. Allow use from March to October.
- C. No Action (environmentally preferable alternative).

#### Decision

Defer decision until after AMP development (Fiscal Year 1986).

#### Rationale

The operator has requested a change from a "stocker" operation to a "cow/calf" operation which requires a year-round lease. Although perennial forage is available, year-round grazing would create significant conflicts with wildlife, while a cow/calf operation would not be feasible under seasonal grazing. Approval of the request at this time would be premature, since we do not know what facilities are necessary to manage wildlife conflicts. However, a perennial allotment could be reconsidered after the development of an Allotment Management Plan (AMP) which would evaluate the grazing capacity of the range. A monitoring system would be formulated.

#### Implementation Needs

Prepare an AMP which will consider three alternatives: an ephemeral allotment, a perennial/ephemeral allotment with year-round grazing, and a perennial/ephemeral allotment with a March to October season of use. The AMP and its Environmental Assessment will be circulated for public review. If either of the latter two alternatives appear biologically and economically feasible, the amendment will be approved at that time. If not, the amendment will be rejected.

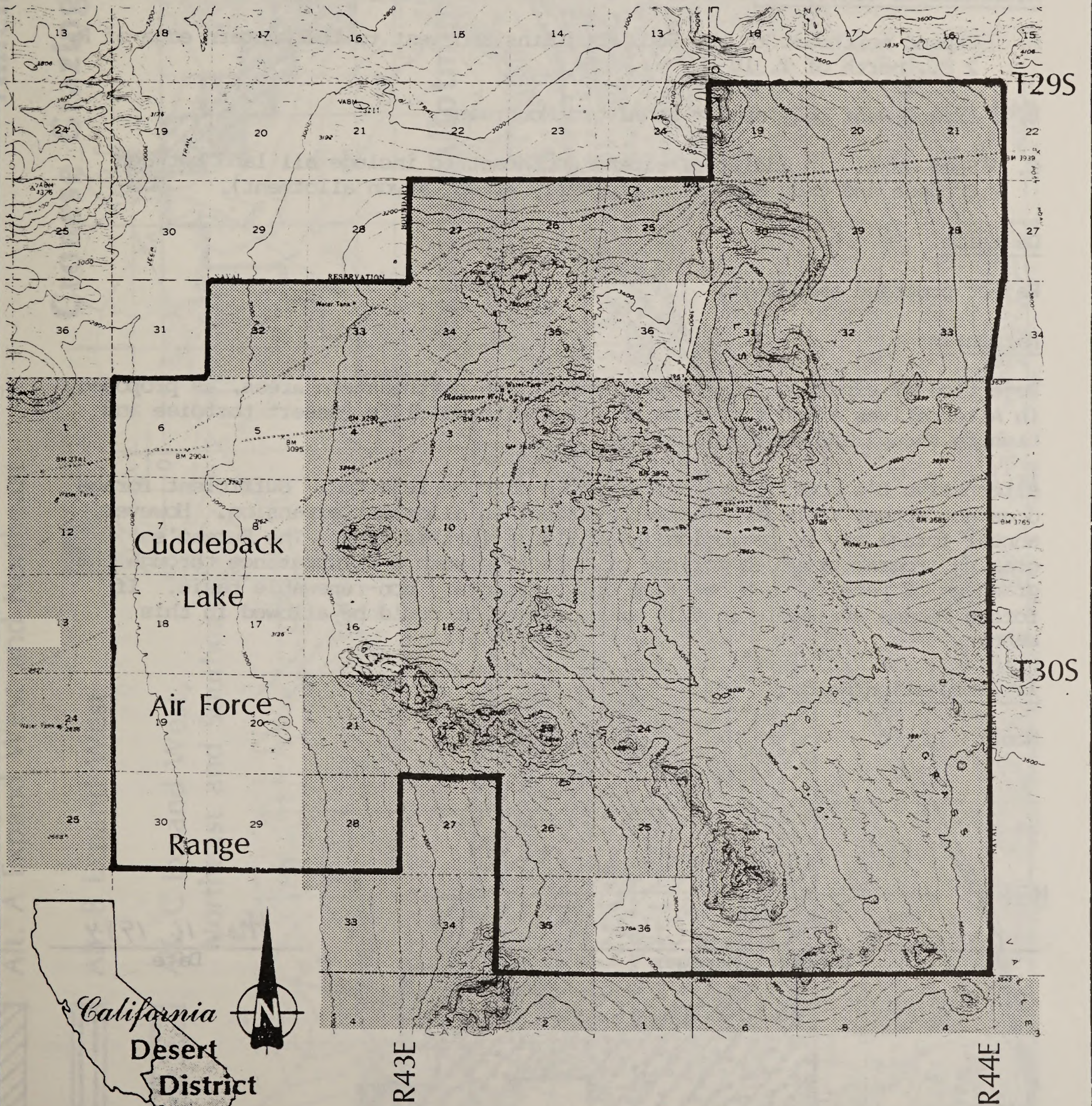
Carroll E. Linn  
District Manager

May 16, 1984  
Date



Modification from "Ephemeral"  
to "Ephemeral/Perennial"  
with year-round usage

## Amendment 9 Pilot Knob Grazing Allotment





AMENDMENT TEN

EXPAND CRONESE GRAZING ALLOTMENT

Proposed Amendment

Expand Cronese Grazing Allotment. Consider four alternatives.

Alternatives Considered

- A. Expand northeast to the Soda Mountains and west to the western edge of R. 2 E., north of T. 10 N.
- B. Expand west only as far as Alvord Mountains.
- C. Same as A. In addition, expand southeast to include all land between Cronese and Cady Mountains (formerly Afton Canyon allotment).

Decision

Reject proposed amendment.

Rationale

Rejection of expansion in the westernmost and northeastern areas, as proposed in Alternatives A and C, avoids conflict with wildlife (desert tortoise and bighorn sheep) and cultural values.

Alternative B's modified expansion would also be rejected. Sufficient forage does not appear to be available to warrant an allotment expansion. However, annual forage may be periodically available in this area. The Bureau's grazing program provides for use of forage in such a circumstance through the granting of permits on a one-time only, temporary non-renewable basis. If forage became available in this area, use of it could be allowed in this manner.

Implementation Needs

None

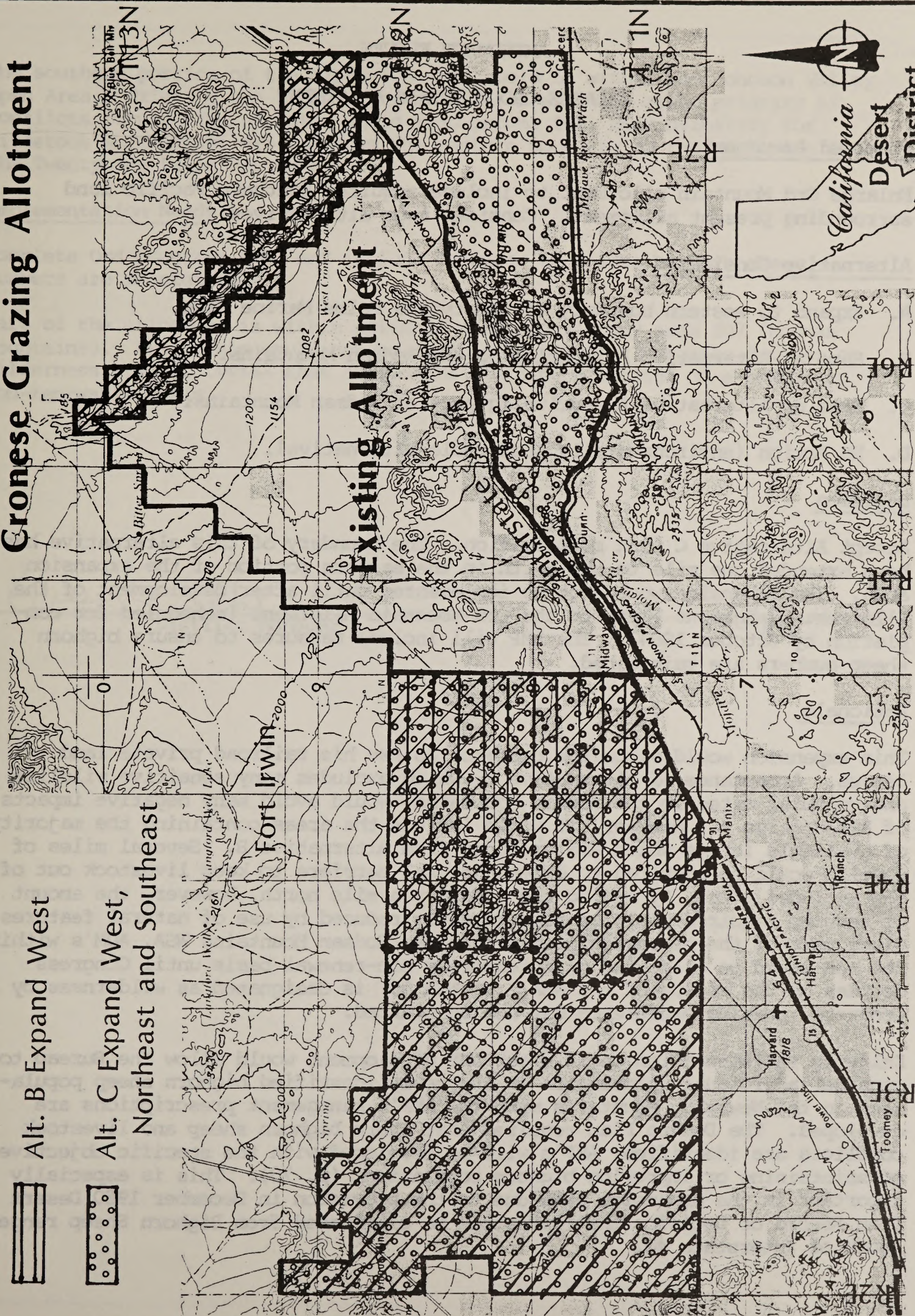
Conrad E. Ebel  
District Manager

May 16, 1984  
Date



# Amendment 10

# Cronese Grazing Allotment





## AMENDMENT ELEVEN

### ENLARGE ORD MOUNTAIN ALLOTMENT

#### Proposed Amendment

Enlarge Ord Mountain allotment to include acquired Southern Pacific land surrounding present allotment. Consider four alternatives.

#### Alternative Considered

- A. Expand to western boundary of Twentynine Palms Marine Base.
- B. Same as Alternative A., excluding the Rodman Mountains.
- C. Same as Alternative A, excluding part of Rodman Mountains.
- D. No Action (environmentally preferable alternative).

#### Decision

Accept Alternative C with modification. The boundary of this alternative has been extended one mile to the north in the eastern portion of the expansion area. The expansion would not be implemented until after development of the Allotment Management Plan for the Ord Mountain Allotment (scheduled for completion by October 1984). The AMP will include measures to ensure bighorn sheep numbers are maintained.

#### Rationale

This expansion would allow the operator to use his railroad private land leases. Acceptance of Alternative C, which excludes many sensitive wildlife and cultural sites in the Rodman Mountains, would avoid many negative impacts of Alternative A. However, it would include the areas containing the majority of available forage which are excluded from Alternative B. Several miles of fencing would be required to extend natural barriers to keep livestock out of the excluded area. By moving the boundary a mile north, however, the amount of fencing required would be significantly reduced by use of natural features. Since part of the expansion lies within the Rodman Mountains WSA, AUM's within the WSA would be allocated on a temporary non-renewal basis until Congress decides on the status of the WSA. If WSA 207 is designated as wilderness by Congress, grazing preference may not be granted.

Delaying implementation until after AMP development would allow the Bureau to consider additional information on the newly identified bighorn sheep population in the Newberry Mountains when the AMP's management prescriptions are developed. The Desert Plan requires that where bighorn sheep and livestock conflicts are identified, AMP's will be developed with the specific objective of maintaining or improving bighorn populations (p. 70). This is especially important in the expansion area due to the provision in December 1980 Desert Plan Record of Decision that livestock be eliminated from Bighorn Sheep ranges south of Interstate 40.



The southern portion of the expansion area would be within the Johnson Valley Open Area. Existing use of the recreation area would be given priority if conflicts occur. The operator would also assume full responsibility for livestock which might drift across the eastern boundary of the expansion into the Twentynine Palms Marine Base.

Implementation Needs

Complete Ord Mountain AMP, and include measures to ensure bighorn sheep numbers are maintained.

Part of the allotment is within suitable wilderness study area 207 (Rodman Mountains). Preference would not be granted until after Congress decides on wilderness status. Until that time, AUMs would be allocated on a temporary non-renewable basis.

Conrad E. Hill

District Manager

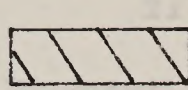
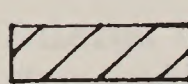
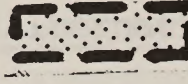
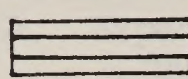
May 16, 1984

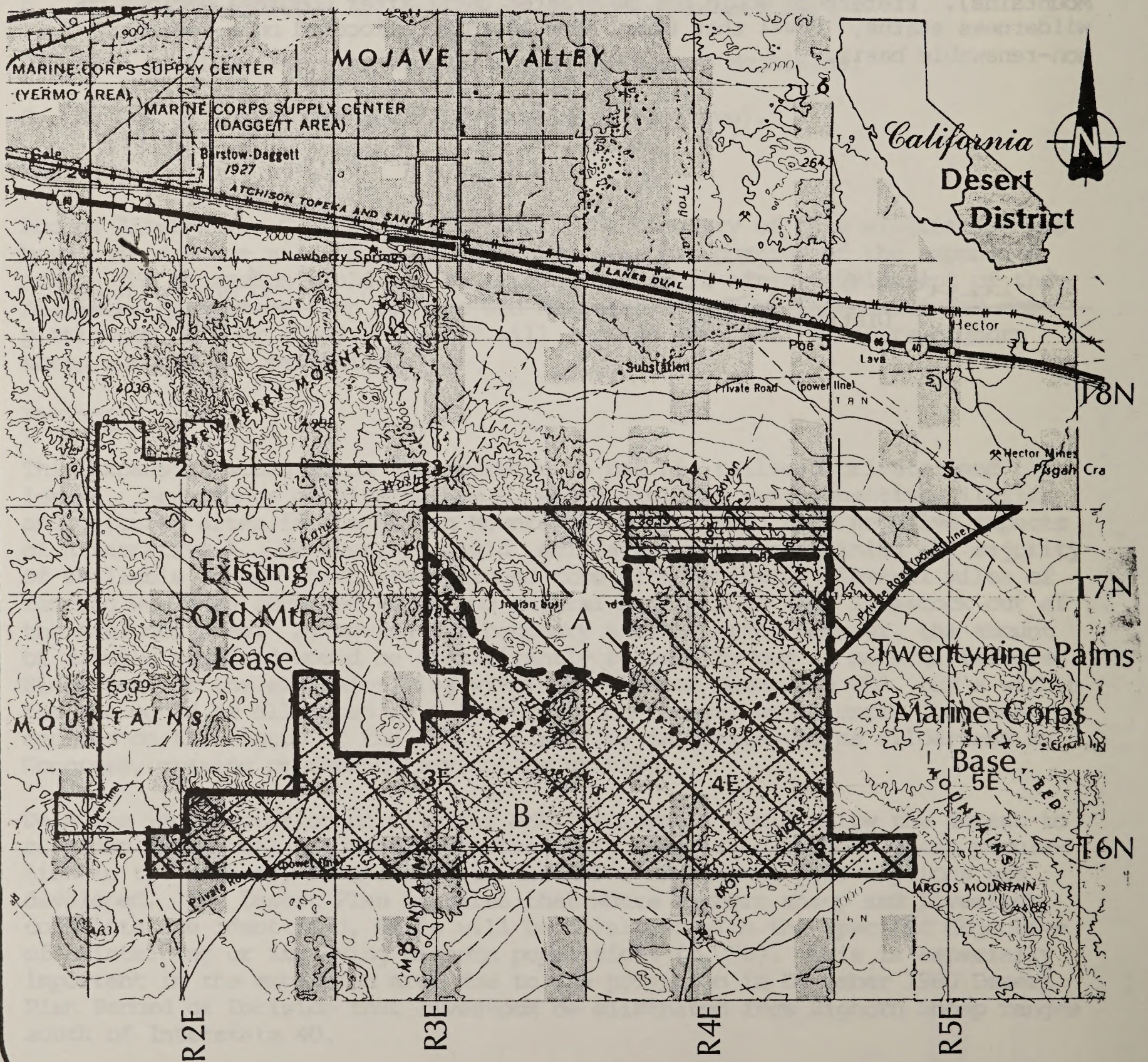
Date



# Amendment 11

## Ord Mtn Grazing Allotment

-  Alt.A  
Expansion (East)
-  Alt.B  
Modified expansion (East)
-  Alt.C
-  Modified Alt. C





## AMENDMENT TWELVE

### DELETE PANAMINT HERD MANAGEMENT AREA FOR BURROS

#### Proposed Amendment

Delete the Panamint Herd Management Area (concentration areas 8, 10, and 12) of the Saline/Panamint Herd Management Planning Area for Burros (environmentally preferable alternative).

#### Other Alternatives

No Action.

#### Decision

Accept proposed amendment.

#### Rationale

Following approval of the Desert Plan in 1980, the China Lake Naval Weapons Center and Death valley National Monument complete management plans calling for removal of burros from land bordering the Panamint Herd Management Area. Burro migratory patterns overlap all three jurisdictions, making it unfeasible to maintain a population in BLM land when removal will be practiced in adjacent jurisdiction. Protection of horses and burros will continue in all other herd management areas. Appropriate population levels will be maintained by capture and removal for live adoption.

#### Implementation Needs

The Saline Herd Management Area Plan (formerly the Saline/Panamint HMAP) will be developed according to the new provision that burros are disallowed in the former Panamint Herd Management Area.

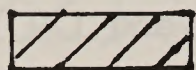
Conrad G. Gilman  
District Manager

May 16, 1984  
Date

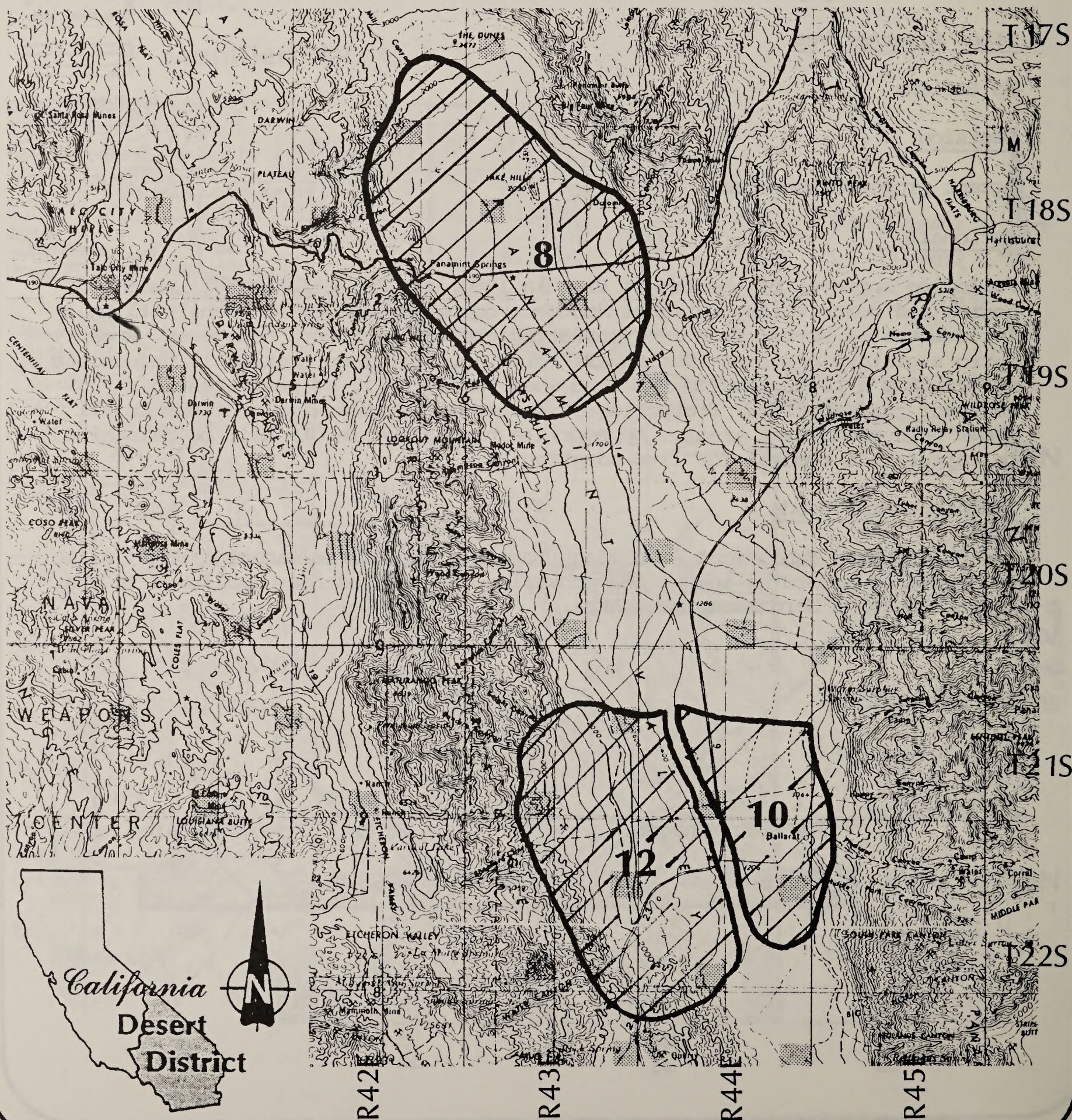


# Amendment 12

## Panamint Herd Mgmt. Area



Delete Herd Mgmt. areas-  
8, 10, and 12





AMENDMENT THIRTEEN

SANTA ROSA MOUNTAINS CLASS CHANGE

Proposed Amendment

Change multiple-use class of the former Wilderness Study Area 341 (Santa rosa Mountains, approximately 65,951 acres). Consider three alternatives.

Alternatives Considered

- A. Change to Class L; designate area as an ACEC.
- B. Change to Class L.
- C. No action (environmentally preferable alternative).

Preliminary Decision

Defer Amendment.

Rationale

The Secretarial Order of December 30, 1982 required the deletion of this area from wilderness consideration because of "split estate" mineral rights. This order was set aside by a preliminary injunction on September 9, 1983. When the litigation is resolved, the Bureau will prepare a Record of Decision confirming the Court's ruling and will implement the decision accordingly.

Implementation Needs

None.

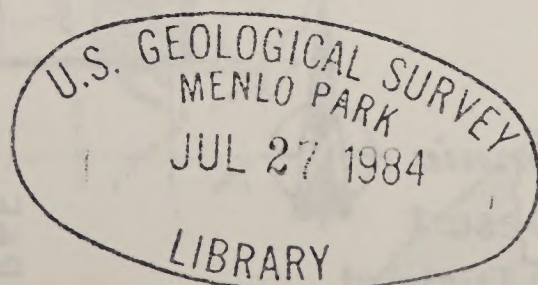
*Decision deferred*

*Gerard E. Linn*

District Manager

*16 May 1984*

Date



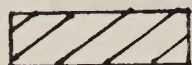


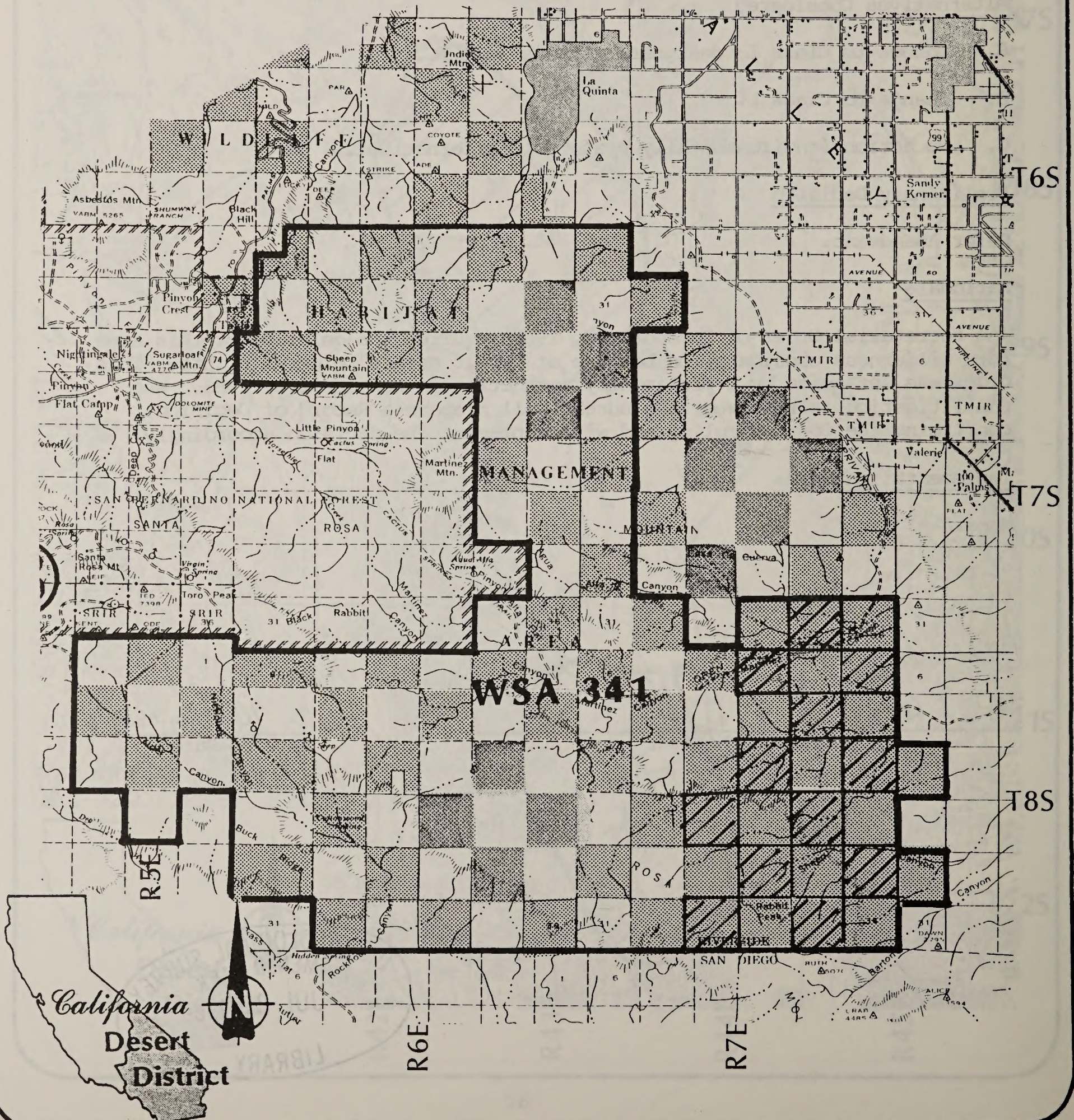
- Alt. A  
Change WSA from "C" to "L"  
and designate as ACEC
- Alt. B  
Change WSA from "C" to "L"

## Amendment 13

WSA 341

Santa Rosa Mtns

 Split Estate land





AMENDMENT FOURTEEN

OROCOPIA MOUNTAINS CLASS CHANGE

Proposed Amendment

change multiple-use class of the former Wilderness Study Area 344 (Orocochia Mountains, approximately 28,422 acres) to Class L.

Other Alternatives Considered

No Action (environmentally preferable alternative).

Preliminary Decision

Defer Amendment.

Rationale

The Secretarial Order of December 30, 1982 required that deletion of most of this area from wilderness consideration because of "split estate" mineral rights. The remaining area, still over 5,000 acres, did not meet other Section 2(c) criteria outlined in the Wilderness Act. The Secretarial Order was set aside by a preliminary injunction on September 9, 1983. When the litigation is resolved, the Bureau will prepare a Record of Decision confirming the Court's ruling and will implement the decision accordingly.

Implementation Needs

None.

*Decision deferred*

*Conrad Epstein*

District Manager

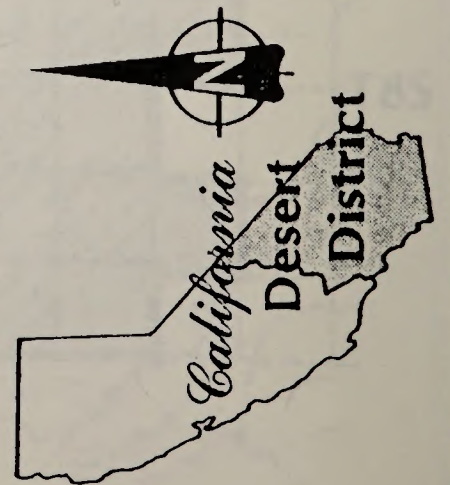
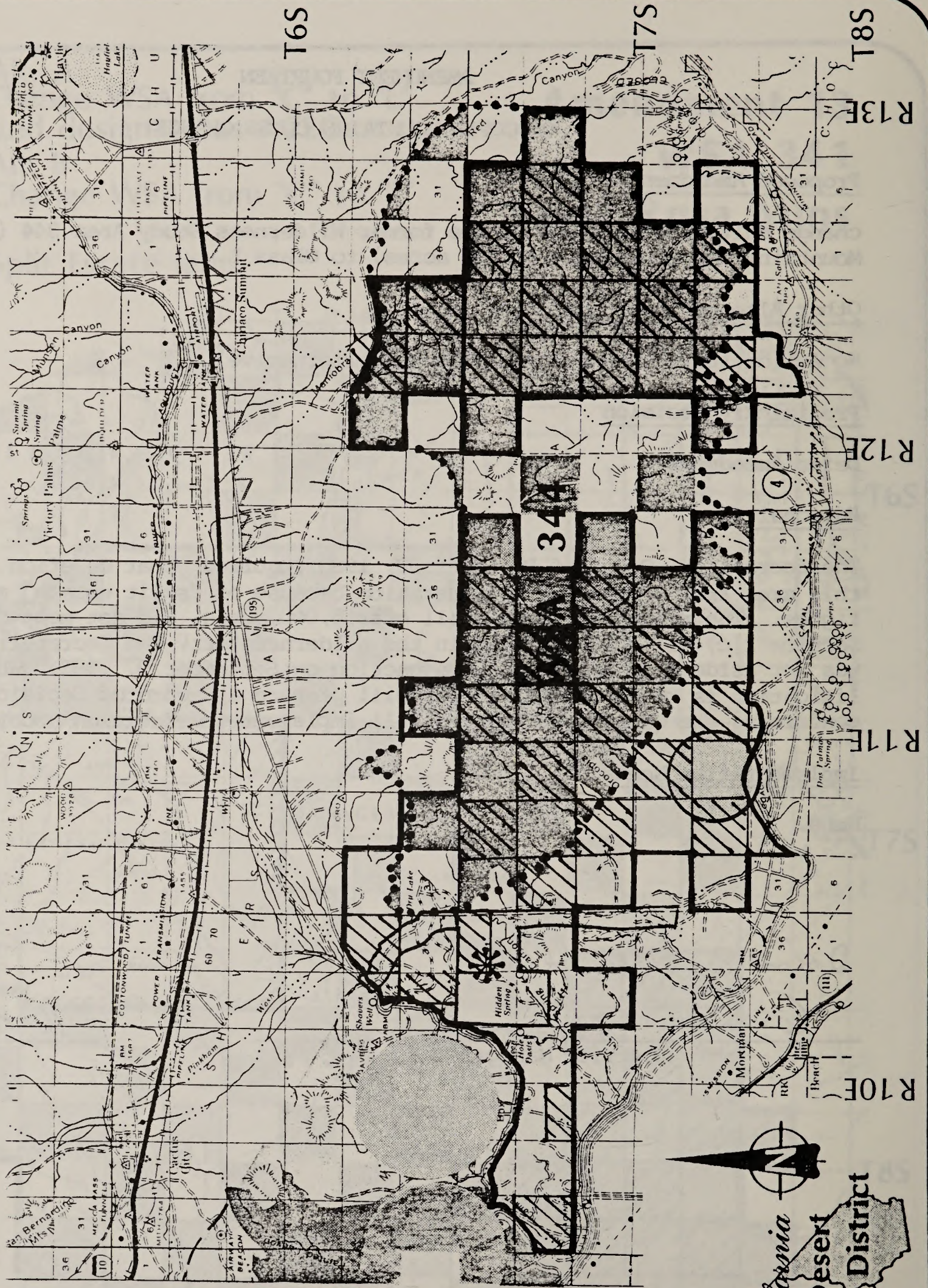
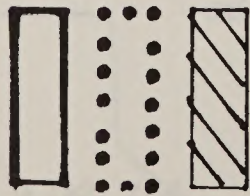
*16 May 1984*

Date



# Amendment 14 WSA 344 Orocopia Mtns

- Change WSA from "C" to "L"
- Area presently recommended "suitable" (Class "C")
- Split Estate land









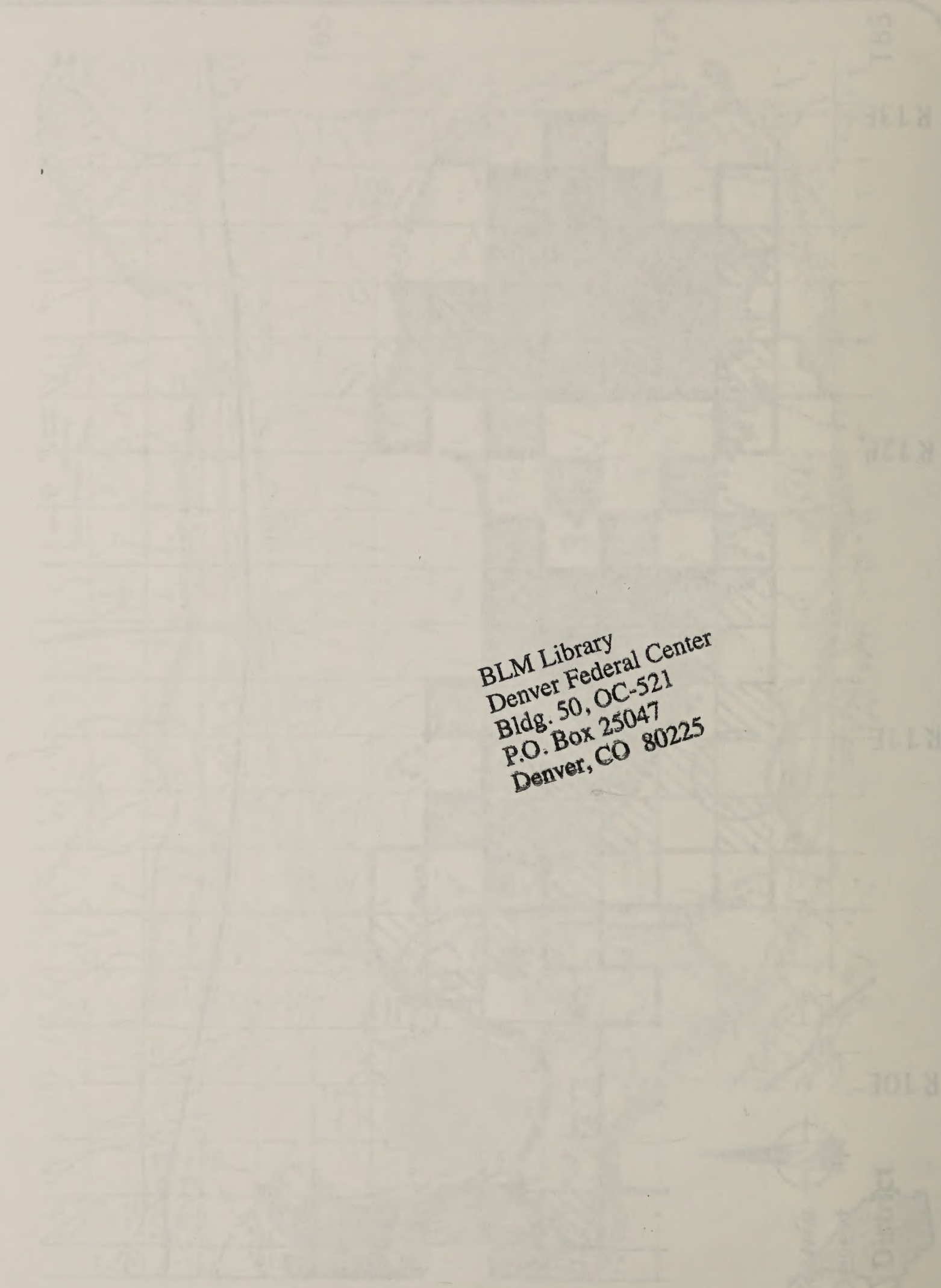
Amendment 14

WSA 344

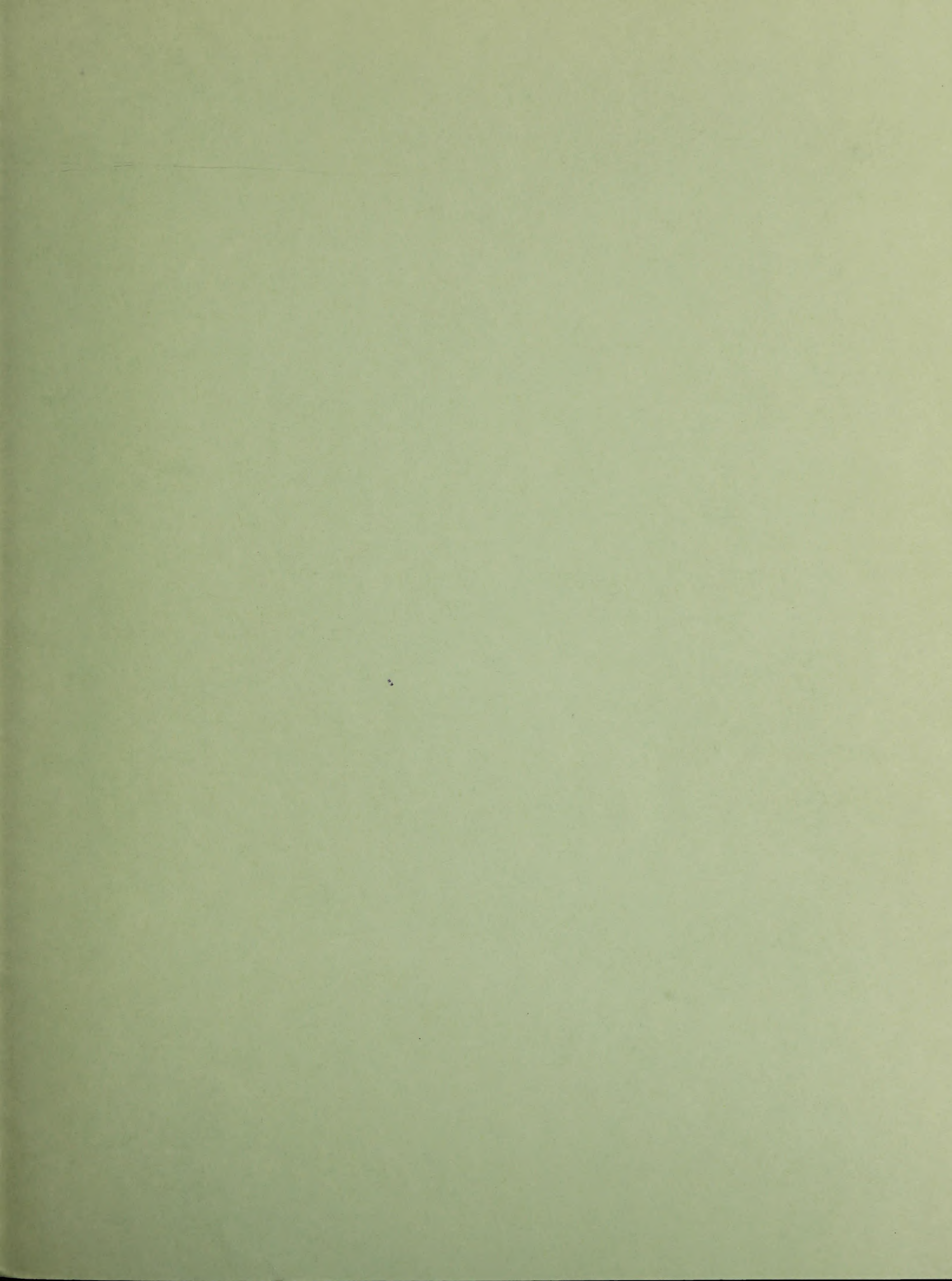
Orocopia Mtns

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~~WITHDRAWN~~

1983 Plan Amendments

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Record of Decision